

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Couper.*



TEOL THE CARRIER.

THE NEIGHBOURS OF KILMACLONE.

CHAPTER II.—STRANGERS BROUGHT HOME.

HER aunt had given her up at last, the company got too deeply engaged with the feast and the fun to mind her, and Molly was taking at least the twentieth look out, when her ear caught the sound of a swift but heavy step coming up the meadow path. She made no exclamations more about the boys, but

softly closing the door behind her, stepped out a few paces and whispered, "Is it yerself, Teol?"

"It's all that's left of me, Molly, aroon," said a stooping figure with something like a pack on its shoulders, as it approached the light that flashed from Cormick's front windows, and the dialogue proceeded in the same undertone.

"Have ye got the goods, Teol?"

"Maybe I haven't; five gallons, eleven over proof, the best that iver came out o' Rory Lanagan's

still. Och, but wasn't my heart broke fetching it down Slievebawn; if it hadn't bin fer the comfort that's in the decent house I was coming till, no mortal man could have stud it."

"Thankful I am that ye have come wid it safe, Teol; sure I've been goin' about like a hen on a hot griddle lookin' out for ye this hour an' more, for betwixt the dhrops to the gentlemen as they come in to take the damp o' the evenin' out o' their minds, an' to the oulder ladies that thought it 'ud warm their hearts betther nor wine, there's not as much left in the decanthers as 'ul serve a mouse to thrate his sweetheart. Is them two cross ould cats, yer sisters, comin' here this evenin'?"

"Not an inch o' them, me jewel; they prefer to stay at home."

"What's the raison o' that, Teol?"

"They're afear'd o' facing ye, avourneen, bekase two o' a thrade niver agree."

"Avourneen, indade!" and Molly's whisper grew sharp with suppressed anger; "who give the likes o' ye lave to take such liberties?"

"Och, sure, Molly, is that the way you're spakin' to yer own boy, after comin' down Slievebawn wid no company but himself an' a five-gallon keg on Hallow Eve night for yer sake? Nothing else in this wide worl' 'ud make me do the like."

"None o' yer stories, Teol; I'm not to be desaved be the flatt'ring tongues o' min; its plenty o' the sort one hears; but come round to the yard, Teol; jist for the present they'll be all hard an' fast at the tay, an' we'll get the keg into the cellar widout anybody smellin' it. I hope ye have brought yer decent clothes."

"They're nately foulde over the keg, Molly."

"Well, thin, ye can slip into the barn an' make yerself respicitable afore any livin' sowl sees ye; an' won't I give ye a thunderin' tay!"

The man with whom Molly transacted that mingled piece of flirtation and business, was a notable character in Kilmacalone and its vicinity, and had by common consent at least three designations. The habit of employing classical names so peculiar to the Irish peasantry gave him the baptismal one of Theophilus, which, by an equally prevalent habit was abbreviated to Teol; his surname was O'Hanly, and he might have claimed descent from an ancient sept that had occupied part of Roscommon and done its share of fighting against the Saxon invader; but Teol took no interest in bygone times or men, having, to use his own words, "throuble enough wid the present." His inheritance consisted of the third share of a mud cabin and a potato-garden, the remaining two-thirds being the patrimony of as many sisters that were unmarried, and, as Teol remarked, like to be; but from his boyhood up he had never been known to do any description of manual labour, except carrying a pack on his shoulders through the most perilous bogs and byways at all hours, but most frequently after dark. With the uninitiated, Teol passed for a pedlar, that order of travelling merchants being yet met with in Roscommon; and he made a considerable use of three cotton handkerchiefs and some yards of tape by way of supporting his mercantile character; but the better informed knew that his real business was that of an agent, or rather medium between the conductors of illicit stills who carried on operations in the caves and hollows of Slievebawn, and their patrons in the country below, acting at once as negotiator, carrier, and advertiser.

The calling was a perilous one, but by no means disreputable in that quarter. Illicit distillation had flourished in Ireland for many a generation, in spite of all that government and its agents could do. The unreclaimed bogs, moors, and mountains of the land afforded eligible sites for the business; and, partly from a national dislike of the revenue laws, partly from a prejudice in favour of the unlicensed article, the people of all ranks secretly encouraged it. At the time of our story, the labours of the celebrated Father Matthew, and other preachers of temperance, had considerably diminished the consumption of ardent spirits throughout the country, but private stills, as they were popularly termed, were yet at work in safe places like the rocky steeps of Slievebawn, and respectable well-to-do men like Cormick O'Dillon preferred to enliven their festivities with the drop that never paid duty. Thus Teol had not only a clear stage but a good deal of favour; his performances in the way of outwitting Excise officers and breaking through their snares were the entertainment of the country people and the pride of his friends; and from his wide and frequent peregrinations in his peculiar kind of peddling, he received the appellation of "Teol the Thraveller." When under the influence of an extra glass, Teol was in the habit of declaring that he had been "in Roosia, Proosia, Portugal an' Spain," but nobody denied that in his flights from the Revenue Police—known in Ireland as the Still Hunters—and other occasions incidental to his calling, he had been over the greater part of Connaught, and also that his lodgings had been more than once in Roscommon Gaol. "Niver for anything but kegs," as his friends proudly testified, for except in his bad vocation of cheating the Excise, Teol was by nature an honest fellow. Without the smallest check upon his motions, the mountain distillers could trust him with their manufacture, and were sure of receiving every farthing that came into his hands in return. Man, woman, or child who found themselves belated, would wait for Teol the Thraveller as the safest company in the lonely by-ways and across the bogs; and no family would hesitate to trust their most private affairs to his discreet keeping and careful management. Teol was temperate too, for one who had to face the mountain wind in all weathers. The goods that pressed so often on his back rarely upset his brain; perhaps habit had something to do with that matter, for it was his opinion that "more nor a pint of the best poteen was seldom good for a young man."

To these questionable gifts it must be added that Teol was a faithful follower of the O'Dillon family. No house in the country side had more followers—that is to say, people of a humbler class than their own who felt themselves bound to serve and assist in all their emergencies, share in all their festivals, and expect their help in all times of necessity. Teol's father had supplied the O'Dillons with poteen from Slievebawn, and Teol himself was the declared admirer of their maid-of-all-trust Molly Dhu. As old romancers were accustomed to say of their heroes and heroines, nature appeared to have made him and Molly for each other, the lover being of the very same stout and sturdy formation as his beloved; but while her hair was coarse and black, his was coarse and red; and while she did all the "scouldin'" that was done at the Lees, he was remarkable for a quiet inoffensive temper and a particularly civil tongue. At any rate, "hand and word," otherways a regular

engagement, was believed to have passed between Teol and Molly, his private mode of accounting for which was, "that Molly was uncommon sensible, and had saved no thrifle;" but an insuperable bar to their happiness existed in the shape of Teol's two sisters. Between them and the bride elect war had been declared at the beginning of the courtship, and was carried on ever since—a period of nearly three years—by stout tongue battles whenever they chanced to meet, and the interchange of belligerent messages, which, as could be thought of only in Ireland, were generally entrusted to Teol, who had too much respect for his own red hair to deliver one of them to either party.

When Teol Roe, or Red—such was his third title, bestowed in consideration of the said high-coloured hair—had slipped in by the back way, to which he was so well accustomed that darkness made no difference, and deposited his keg in the cellar, with a whisper of, "Thankful I am it's off me back an' me mind too."

"At ony rate there'll be something to dhrink Miss Honor's health wid on her birth-night, an' the daacent house won't look poor an' mane afore the nabours; that was my trouble," said Molly, as she conducted him to the barn-door. "Here's a match an' a canel for ye; mind ye don't set it too near the hay; an' here's the loan o' me own lookin'-glass. Throth it's more nor ye deserve, but I couldn't see ye comin' into the house ondacent." And with these gentle observations, Molly scoured away to the front door, entered as quietly as she had gone out, and in another minute was seated at her tea, remarking that "there was no word o' them boys, but she hoped Providence 'ud sind thim home safe."

Shortly after, Teol made his appearance by the same front door, as a newly arrived guest, in all the respectability of a blue coat with brass buttons, a white linen waistcoat, what was known in Roscommon as a "Thurkey" red handkerchief, by way of tie, and a gilt breast-pin, the pride of the rustic beau. Notwithstanding the churlishness of nature as regarded him, a beau Teol was, though he did not depend entirely on appearance for impressing the hearts of the fair. Teol had the gift supposed to be conferred by the blarney-stone, and somehow inherited by most of his countrymen, which, together with a liberal use of fine words—for though he could neither read nor write, his uncle had been a schoolmaster—gained him the character of a "very gentale boy" among the women of all ages. "Me sarvice to ye, ladies and gentlemin; it's proud I am to see yer assambled this Hallow Eve night in the kitchen of the honourable Misther O'Dillon," he said, with a general bow. "Mistress Maloy"—this was addressed to a widow of fifty, in a print gown and linen cap—"is it younger an' handsomer you're growin' ivery day; sure, if me grandmother hadn't warned me agin widers in time, this night would have saled me ondoin'. Miss Katty Smith, is it yerself or Venush I see in that corner?" He was addressing a maid with a cast in both eyes and hair as red as his own. "Miss Susy Boyle, is it the first rose of summer I'm to put in comparishment with you this evenin'?" Here Teol's complimentary career was cut short by a shout of, "Lave off yer nonsinse an' come to yer tay," from the commanding Molly, who did not quite relish so much blarney bestowed on other ladies. "You'll be late enough wid it," she continued, "considhering that ye niver dhrink less nor three quart bous.

What on 'arth kept ye so long a comin'? Out on some o' yer thravels, I suppose. Well, it's extonishin' to me, Teol, you're not afear'd of meetin' the fairies, goin' about yer leaf alone on a Hallow Eve night."

"No, thank ye," said Teol, quietly sitting down to the first "quart boul;" for he was used to be commanded, "I niver saw anything worse nor an exciseman in all my goin' about on Hallow Eve nights."

"Misther Teol, do ye think there's any sich thing as fairies?" said the flattered Mrs. Maloy, determined not to lose her hold on his attention. "I'm tould the larned people won't allow there iver was any."

"Throth, I'm not sure o' that," said Teol; "my uncle was a larned man, as yer all know. I mane him that kept the siminary behind Jaimsay Regan's turf stack, an' he tould me that himself and Wider MacClery—a woman nearly reproaching yer own sinse—was sittin' up wid his wife's brother-in-law, that the docther japanned for information on the brain, be raison of an accident he met wid from Tim Roary's stick at the fair of Castle Blany, when they hears—" As Teol arrived at this point, a tremendous sound passed through the house, which, if it resembled anything earthly, was like the roar of an infuriated bull sent through the keyhole of the outer door.

It startled alike kitchen and parlour. A shout of exclamations resounded through the dwelling. Cormick O'Dillon and some of the most staid men of the company sprang to their feet, and stood as if thunderstruck for a minute; but Molly Dhu rushed to the door.

"Sure, it's that say monsther Paddy-the-Post that me Aunt Betty has the misfortun to own for a son, blastin' through the keyhole on the bull's-horn he keeps to let the gintry know he has letthers for thim. Don't I hear him and his decateful brat of a sisther, Unah, sniggerin' out there.

"Come in, ye ugly baist! How dar' ye friggin the wits and sineses out o' dacent people on sich a night? Safety be about us, but ye well deserve to meet wid something that 'ud take the consate out o' ye," and she dragged in by the collar of the one and the arm of the other, a tall fresh-coloured youth, with the engine of terror—a huge bull's-horn—still in his hand, and a small, pretty girl, with a head of brown curls, and a newly ironed dress of pink gingham.

"Well, ye needn't be scouldin' an' thralin'," said the former, recovering his impudence, boy-like; "I was comin' across the bog wid Unah, bekase she was late doin' up her gingham, when jist beside the first of the swallyin' holes we meets Masther Connel an' Masther Maurice, an' they bids me to run home an' tell yer, every one."

"What is it, Paddy?" said Cormick, quietly removing Molly's hand from his collar.

"Yer honour, there's two gentlemin in a post-chaise from Dublin stuck in the first of the swallyin' holes, an' Masther Connel an' Maurice can't get them out," said the liberated youth.

"Well, you should have given us the intelligence without that horn;" but the good-natured master of the Lees laughed as he spoke. "Come, Denis, Mike, and all my men, we must get the strangers out of our bog. Neighbours, won't some of you help us?"

"They've got it exthercated, sir," cried the active Teol, rushing in from a run he had taken towards

the bog—"they've got it exthercated, an' they're comin' at the rate of a weddin'."

"It's a blessin' that they are safe. Come, boys and girls, bring out the candles, and let them see their way," said Cormick, himself setting the example; and in another minute half the household, and more than half the company, were out in the still night with candles in their hands, which lit up the meadow in front, and showed a muddy chaise driven up to the house by an equally muddy postilion, and followed by four considerably splashed young men. But for all the evidences of the boghole that were about them, four finer fellows could not have been found in the county, and Roscommon never wanted for handsome men. The two that took the lead were Cormick O'Dillon's sons—one would have known them to be so at a glance. Connel, the eldest, now in early manhood, for he had not completed his twenty-first year, looked as Cormick must have done when he rode in the county hunt. Connel had the same tall robust figure, the same frank, handsome face and easy, careless air; but his lip had a firmer set and his eye a fiercer flash when anything happened to disturb his temper, which confirmed the general remark of his neighbours, that "Connel was his father's son, but he had the O'Dillon blood, and the man that offinded him would be sure to meet his match."

Maurice, the younger, was neither so tall nor so robust, being little more than a youth, for he was not yet nineteen. His resemblance to Cormick was still stronger, but it was Cormick's sobered and saddened days, with the memory of a lost wife and the cares of a growing-up family, that the young face resembled; for though eminently handsome and more refined in mould and expression than that of his brother, it was serious and thoughtful before the time, like one that had strange and early difficulties to contend with; and those that took most note of Maurice observed that look growing upon him, season after season, as he came to visit his family and returned to the preparatory school, and the usual comment of Kilmacalone was, "Sure it's the larnin' and the religion that's takin' hould of him intirely; isn't he the boy that's regularly made for the church? one'ud think he was going to say mass every day in the week." The two strangers that followed had by some years the advantage of the young O'Dillons, though they were both young too, somewhere about five and twenty; but a short start tells in the growing and changeful time. Moreover, there was an air of town life and town fashion about them, which made a marked difference between them and the country-bred boys; and though both were evidently of the same class, nature had made a still more marked difference between the pair.

The tallest was something above Connel O'Dillon's height, and of that Norman type that Strongbow and his followers planted so long ago in Ireland—the families that, according to old accusing documents, became more Irish than the Irish themselves. He had the Romanesque features, the dark eyes and hair, and the look of distinction and high-breeding which characterise their descendants to this day. Moreover, an observant eye might read in his fine face a combination of qualities peculiar to no race, but ennobling to the individual man; a high but kindly and affectionate spirit, and a resolute, self-reliant character, on whose truth and honour others might rely as well. His companion would not have looked a plain man beside most people: middle sized, neither very dark

nor very fair, with no marked features and a decidedly genteel carriage, hundreds like him might be seen in any Dublin assembly of sufficient magnitude; a commonplace man, but of the Irish type, a gay companion for men, a flattering wooer for women; but those who chanced to see his frown would have guessed that the only strong points in his character were an obstinate adherence to his own will and way whatever they might cost, and an unforgiving, unforgetting hatred of those who opposed them.

"Welcome home, Maurice, my boy; you have grown a man in the last six months," said Cormick, clapping his second son on the back. "Welcome to my house, gentlemen," he continued to the strangers. "I am sorry you had to cross the Roscommon bogs in such damp weather, and a dark night too."

"Many thanks, sir," said the tallest of the pair; "but have I the pleasure of speaking to Mr. Cormick O'Dillon, of the Lees?"

"The same, at your service," said Cormick.

"Perhaps you will remember my name, then?" and the young man extended his hand. "It is Redmond Fitzmaurice, and I am the grandson of Mrs. Fitzmaurice, of Merrion Square, Dublin."

"Master Redmond," cried Cormick, with a grasp and a shake which the young man must have recollect ed for some time after, "a hundred thousand welcomes, *cead mile failte*, as we say in Irish, you're a son of the Fitzmaurice every inch; but you will excuse my not knowing you, for the last time we met you were dressed in a pinafore; it is twenty years ago at the least."

"It must be, Mr. O'Dillon, or I should have remembered better where Kilmacalone lay, and what the Roscommon bogs were like at Martinmas time. You must know, my friend Mr. Gerald Bourke here and I set out by the Dublin mail this morning for French Park, where I have an uncle, and he has some business; but when we reached the 'Shilelah and Shamrock'—I dare say you know the house, sir—it was getting dark, and the guard and driver got so bad a report of the road before them, that they agreed to put up there for the night; so did the rest of the passengers; but we wanted to get to my uncle's in time for the Hallow Eve fun, and Con Casey, a fellow accustomed to posting between Dublin and the west, offered to take us as safe as a church in his chaise. Con is not a bad driver, and ought to know the roads in this quarter, so we started with him some two hours ago. But he treated himself rather liberally in preparation for his journey; we treated him too, and the result was that but for the help of these gentlemen, your sons, I believe, we should have finished the evening in a boghole," said Fitzmaurice.

"Well, you will finish it better at the Lees, I think, Mr. Bourke. I am happy to make your acquaintance, and bid you welcome to my house, as I would any friend of the Fitzmaurice family," and Cormick shook hands with the newly-introduced as warmly as if he had been a brother come back from sea, while Bourke made profuse acknowledgements and apologies for trespassing on his hospitality and giving trouble, as though a sudden wind of ceremony had blown over the young Irishman.

"Oh, Mr. O'Dillon won't mind that, I know from the pinafore days. He'll take us in for Christian charity, let us change our dirty clothes for some decent ones we have got in the chaise, maybe give us some trifles to eat and drink, and rest in shelter

for an hour or so till the moon rises or Con gathers back his senses, and we can get on to French Park."

" You will not go to French Park to-night, Master Redmond," said Cormick, cutting Fitzmaurice short. " There are more holes in the bog than the one you have tried. You and your friend will do me the favour to stay at my house to-night; 'tis Hallow Eve, and more than that, it is your grandmother's birth-night, and the birth-night of her namesake, my eldest daughter, Honor, whom you have never seen; but here she comes, and here is my mother and my two younger girls."

There was a general introduction of Cormick's family and friends at the open door. Introduction was a quickly-done business in Kilmaclane; but some of the remarking people who are to be found in all companies, thought that if young Fitzmaurice had never seen Honor before, he would know her again, and so would his friend Bourke, such earnest and admiring looks did they cast on the beautiful girl at first sight. " Glad and thankful I am to see you coming to the Lees this Hallow Eve night, grown a fine man and the picture of your father, the brave captain who fell at the battle of Navarino, so many years ago; and you are like your mother, too. Bless her! she did not live long after him. I suppose you scarcely remember them, Master Redmond?" said old Mrs. O'Dillon, as she held the young man's hand and gazed into his face; " but I do, well, and the sight of you brings the old times and the old faces back to me. Lord make you as good as you are handsome! but come in; and here's Molly Dhu—you'll remember her, maybe—ready to wait on you and your

friend. You'll get your dinners first, and then come down to the company, for you see we have a gathering of old neighbours here, and I know a young Fitzmaurice can always take his share of games with the girls."

" Don't trouble yourself about Con and the chaise," said Cormick, as he caught Bourke's careful glance in that direction; " my men will look after them, and the poor fellow will be all right in the morning."

" Wid yer lave, sir, I'll look affer Con," said Teol Roe, coming up with the half-conscious postilion leaning on his shoulder; " he's a Roscommon man, and an ould frind o' mine. We were in gaol togither three months last Midsummer was a' two years."

" What for, my good man?" said Bourke.

" Well, the master there knows that I was niver in fer anythin' barrin' a keg on me back widout a permit in me pocket; an' Con, ye see, was in that time for a misfortun he had with his stick on a perliceman's head at a scrimmage in the ' Fightin' Cock,'" said Teol. " The dirthy spalpeens o' jurymin brought him in guilty, wid intint to do gravious bodily harm; but sorra a bad intintion iver Con had; he's the daecest boy in Roscommon or out of it, only the whisky, an' maybe the could o' the bog, has overcome him. Howsomiver, we'll thry him wid green tay at the kitchen fire, an' if that won't bring him till his sinesses, the boys an' me'll take him up to Mike's bed wid a blissin', an' let him sleep off his troubles."

" You see, gentlemen, that sticks and stills are yet at work in our county; but you may trust Teol with your postilion, nobody has a better understanding of such cases," said Cormick, as he marshaled in his company.

OUR FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB.

BY HENRY WALKER, F.G.S., AUTHOR OF "SATURDAY AFTERNOON RAMBLES," ETC.

EXCURSION V.—IN THE LOWER THAMES VALLEY.

SATURDAY afternoon once more comes round, and we meet again for a holiday ramble amidst the green landscapes that lie outside the smoke and stir of London. Our excursion to-day is to Erith and Crayford, in the lower Thames valley. The locality is a part of Kent much resorted to by holiday-making Londoners and lovers of the picturesque. The great landscape scenes which are to be enjoyed from Belvedere Hill and other spots on the southern brow of the valley, and in which the broad and winding Thames is the main feature, are of themselves a sufficient reward for the journey.

But the special attractions which draw us to Erith and Crayford to-day, are those which geologists, rather than painters, delight in. This part of the lower Thames valley has a great reputation for strange discoveries made in the dry bed of the old River Thames; discoveries which have helped to throw a great light upon the zoology and geography of the ancient Thames country.

At Erith and Crayford, the old and long-deserted bed of the prehistoric Thames is laid open in several places to the researches of the fossil-seeker. Skirting the present shrunken stream, the older and wider channel may be traced beneath the grass, and underlying many a human habitation, for some distance inland. Both at Erith and Crayford the visitor can

descend from the upper air into the depths of this old bed of the Thames, among the dry and consolidated river sediment, and see for himself its mysterious contents. He will find himself in the midst of a great underground zoological museum, arranged in far-distant pre-Adamite times by Nature's own hands. All around him is one of Nature's great cemeteries, in which lie many a

" Monstrous bone of ancient time."

Here, too, bedded thick together in the dried mud, are colonies of minute and delicate shells, beautiful even after the lapse of untold ages, with their native rainbow-tinted iridescence. These fragile yet perfect shells belonged to creatures which inhabited the Thames when the mammoth and rhinoceros of prehistoric Kent came down to drink of the mightier waters; and the remains of the huge land animals, as well as of the aquatic molluscs of the period, are here found together in a common grave. Thus, at Erith and Crayford the excursionist may see the

" Relics of an older world, which tell
Of changes slow or sudden that have passed
Over the face of Nature . . .
. . . and so preserved to show
Man of those things whereof he ought to know."

We leave Cannon Street railway station for Erith

by the 2.10 p.m. North-Kent train, third class. Early as the hour is, we have a good muster of the rising geological generation from all parts of London. Those formidable hammers which glisten in the belts of some of the party will not be wanted to-day (except, perchance, to crack a monster flint), for the scene of our exploration is one of sand and loam, and not of hard rock. Our leader carries a Geological Survey Map and a pocket compass, which serve for the whole party, but each individual will need, as we shall see, a pocket-knife to himself. (The Survey Map for the Erith and Crayford country is the quarter-sheet of No. 1, s.w., coloured, and is on the one-inch scale.)

The railway geology between London and Erith, as we may study it from the carriage windows, is interesting and noteworthy. So also is the physical geography of the Thames valley, which should be carefully scanned.

Between New Cross and Lewisham the chalk formation (the white sediment of an old sea-bottom) comes up to the daylight for a short distance (owing to a local upthrow) after the tremendous plunge of some hundreds of feet under London which it takes in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. That noticeable light-coloured sand which shows itself so frequently in the railway cutting, is also a marine sediment, like the chalk; it is known in geological parlance as the "Thanet Sand." It lies next upon the chalk, and is overlaid by the clayey sands and pebble-beds of the so-called Woolwich and Reading series, all of which we may see in turn from the carriage windows. At Blackheath (where the pebble-bed we saw at Bromley in a recent excursion is in great force) our train suddenly rushes into the darkness of a huge natural tumulus, and we are burrowing our way through Blackheath Tunnel. As we emerge into the daylight again, we make a note of some extensive sandpits lying to the right of the railway: they seem to offer the finest sections of Thanet Sand near to London. This same sandy formation pursues us to Charlton (here, too, are chalkpits for the fossil-seeker) and Woolwich. Just beyond Woolwich the railway begins to traverse the "waste enormous marsh" of Plumstead, running parallel with the Thames, but about two miles from it, so that the scene of our explorations in the physical geography of the landscape is coming into view.

We are upon romantic ground at Plumstead Marshes. Below us lies the famous old submerged forest which the Thames now flows over.

"No more shall its venison grace the dish,
The ancient forest yields nought but fish."

Beneath the grass and the peat are the trees of a forest of oak, pine, birch, and hazel. The stools of some of these trees, still standing erect, may be seen on the southern shore of the river at low tide. The forest was cut into by the workmen during the main drainage excavations, but it was examined and described long before by Dr. Buckland.

From Plumstead Marshes, too, the great wide trough of the old Thames valley, lying between the Kent and Essex hills, is well seen, and we may easily recognise it as a *valley of excavation*. We see what must have been the width of the old waters which gradually cut back the northern and southern shores, until they now form the brows of a valley many times

wider than the present stream. If we look at the narrowness of the Thames of to-day, we see at once its inadequacy to cut out so wide a valley as this, and we have to imagine waters of a much greater volume and excavating power to accomplish so enormous a work. The southern brow of the valley will be observed flanking the right of the railway. It runs persistently parallel with both rail and river, appearing as a chain of summits broken with small side valleys. It is well within observation, and is a fine and striking geographical memorial of the old mammoth-haunted Thames.

At length we hear the welcome shout of "Erith!" from the lungs of guards and porters. There, on the right of the railway, are the enormous Erith sandpits. But we must go farther south to find the old bed of the Thames. These sands at Erith are the Thanet series again (marine, and not fossiliferous at this spot). Overlying them are a few feet of the Woolwich clay, full of shells. (N.B.—To get at this shell-bed, go round by the Bexley road, and so reach the top of the escarpment, where you will find more fossils than you will care to carry home.)

The mammoth pits we are in search of are down the Crayford road, about half a mile from Erith railway station. They are known in the neighbourhood as "White's brick-earth pits." Here they are!—about one-third of a mile from the river, and close to Lesnes Park, surrounding a brick-kiln with tall chimney. Who would think of coming here, amid cornfields, and villas, and churches, and parks, to find the old bed of the Thames!

Can these sandpits be the romantic spot of which we have heard—the famous graveyard of mammoths and mighty pre-Adamites that once walked these Kentish hills? Does this excavation really reveal to us the bed of the ancient river, full of the fossil-shells of the mammoth age? Let us descend and see for ourselves.

The sides of the pit rise up like a cliff or escarpment. The face of earth thus exposed consists of false-bedded sands, overlain with loam or brick-earth. If we have here a true river sediment, it may contain river shells. The sand near the base does contain shells, for we see them standing out and glistening in the sun; so we at once prepare for action. The hammers may be returned to their belts, and give place to the humbler clasp-knife or pen-knife. Here are two escarpments, each long enough and rich enough in shells to reward a hundred workers. The specimens are mostly small, and extremely fragile, but as perfect as recent ones. But there are also some large *anodonts* among them. Great care is required to get a perfect specimen out of its matrix. This fine *unio* here will require a good ten minutes of patient work. Sometimes the outer portions flake off and reveal the prismatic hues on the interior, shining with the iridescent nacreous tints we see in the mother-of-pearl. Those of us who have been thoughtful enough to bring some large pill-boxes from the chemist's have soon a good collection of the smaller shells carefully boxed up. The larger ones must be put up separately, enclosed in wadding.

The fossil shells found in this pit at Erith are of both land and fresh-water genera, but of course the fresh-water are the more abundant. They are principally of the genera *Limnea*, *Paludina*, *Valvata*, *Ancylus*, etc., which generally occur in lacustrine and estuarine deposits. On this particular Saturday

afternoon the following species are found and identified by one of the most earnest workers of our party.

LAND AND FRESH-WATER SHELLS AT ERITH BRICK-EARTH PIT.

<i>Bythinia tentaculata.</i>	<i>Planorbis marginatus.</i>
<i>Valvata piscinalis.</i>	<i>Planorbis spirorbis.</i>
<i>Helix cantiana</i> (land).	<i>Planorbis corneus</i> (?)
<i>Helix nemoralis</i> (land).	<i>Cyrena fluminalis.</i>
<i>Succinea putris.</i>	<i>Pisidium</i> (?)
<i>Limnea peregra.</i>	[J.A.C.]

On a former visit to the Erith Cyrena pit, a well-known London geologist (Mr. Tylor) found *Ancylus fluvialis*, *Planorbis carinatus*, *P. corneus*, *P. vortex*, *Anodonta cygnea*, *Sphaerium corneum*, *Pisidium amnicum*, *P. fontinale*, *Unio pectorum*, and *Valvata cristata* among the fresh-water genera, and *Carychium minimum*, *Helix bipida*, and *Pupa marginata* among the land shells buried in this old bed of the Thames.

Most of these Erith shells, beautiful and perfect as they are in form, are small in size, but it would be a mistake to pass them over on this account. Mr. Gwyn Jeffreys, an eminent conchologist, has made the remark that many of our minute shells, which are so light that a hundred of them would scarcely balance the smallest weight used by apothecaries, are among our greatest treasures. For those who want big shells, the *unions* which are being got right and left of us in this pit will be acceptable.

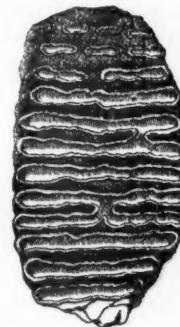
This famous pit at Erith is known among geologists as the *Cyrena* pit, from the bands of shells of *Cyrena fluminalis* which are found in it. It is distant about 600 yards from the river.

We leave off shell-collecting for a space to hear our leader explain that the sediments of the ancient Thames which are here in such thickness as to form the cliff or escarpment at the feet of which we are standing, are actually found as high as eighty feet above the flood tide of the Thames of to-day! Even the fossil *Cyrena* shells are sometimes found forty-five feet above high-water mark. Thus we learn what was once the level of the Thames, how much vaster it was as a feature of the landscape, and how the great river has since shrunk into a narrower channel.

In this very pit may also be seen the original chalk slope of the old valley on this its Kentish shore—the valley which was formed before these vast layers of sand and loam were deposited in their trough. Here it is, just by the deeper excavations. It has an average incline of 30°, but here and there the angle is much steeper (see Mr. Tylor's sections). It tells a striking tale of the greater cutting power of the currents of the old river.

But that shrill whistle from one of our party tells of some unusual discovery. Perhaps it is a relic of the mammoth, which has just been dug out of the brick-earth, to be taken home as a trophy of elephant-hunting in Kent. Whatever it is, the lucky discoverer is seen pulling at it with both hands to extract it from the matrix of loam or brick-earth. This is what it proves to be.—It is one of the grinders of the mammoth—the fleece-clad elephant, whose woolly hair and tusks we see in the British Museum. These great stone-like teeth are the most durable parts of the animal, and hence they are found when all traces of the bony skeleton have long since decayed. Teeth of the mammoth are to be found at Ilford, Gray's Thurrock, and Crayford, as well as Erith, especially at an early period of the year, when the greater excavations

in the pits take place for brick-making purposes. We add this Erith specimen to the trophies of the day.



MAMMOTH'S TOOTH (ABOUT ONE-FOURTH NATURAL SIZE).

By this time we have satisfied ourselves that this celebrated Erith Cyrena-pit is as romantic and wonderful a spot as we were led to believe. We have seen for ourselves some of those buried forms of ancient life which prove the dried mud and sand all around us to be truly the sediment of some former river. We can trace in the landscape the connection of this old river-bed with the modern Thames which flows close at hand, and close at our feet is the chalk slope of the original valley.

Many other strange things have been found in this underground zoological museum. Here is a list of the remains of large land animals which at different times have been disinterred from these graves at Erith:—The Cave Lion* (*Felis spelaea*), the Cave Hyena (*Hyæna spelæa*), the Great Urus (*Bos primigenius*), the Eastern Elephant, and the Mammoth (*Elephas primigenius*). At Crayford pits, a little farther on, we shall find that a still more wonderful assemblage of animals of species now extinct or exotic have been discovered.

It would appear that at both Erith and Crayford, the particular spots where these accumulations of animal remains are found were favourably situated for reception and preservation of the drift of the ancient river. In fact, the greater thickness of sediment which is found at these two places (the sand and loam together forming a deposit fifty feet deep at Erith) seems to depend upon the existence of hollows in the underlying chalk, which formed huge basins by the side of the earlier stream in which the carcasses of land animals were drifted and entombed. The perfect state in which we find the most fragile of shells in these pits, tells of the tranquillity of the waters in which they were allowed to settle, and that they found a resting-place out of the reach of the more violent currents of the river.

Our Saturday afternoon is now fast waning, and we must leave Crayford (where remains of three kinds of rhinoceros are found) for another excursion. Erith has well sustained the character for geological romance which drew us hither, as these trophies we are bearing away—these shells and the relic of the mammoth—will serve to remind us.

But before our train comes up to Erith station, we have time to enter Belvedere Park, ascend the beautiful hill, and scan once more the great river-valley below us. Here, near Prospect Tower, and amid

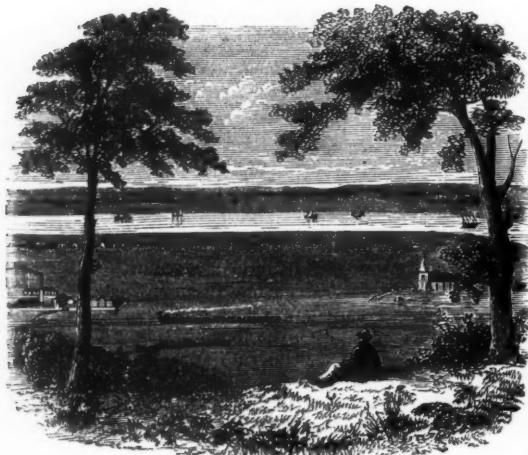
* For an account of the British lion discovered in the Thames valley and elsewhere, see the "Leisure Hour" for July 1, 1870.

IN THE LOWER THAMES VALLEY.

grand oaks and chestnuts, we rest awhile, and muse on the wonderful history of the landscape, in the light of our geographical and zoological discoveries to-day. Here is a glimpse of the scene which presents itself—an aspect of the Thames valley in this nineteenth century.

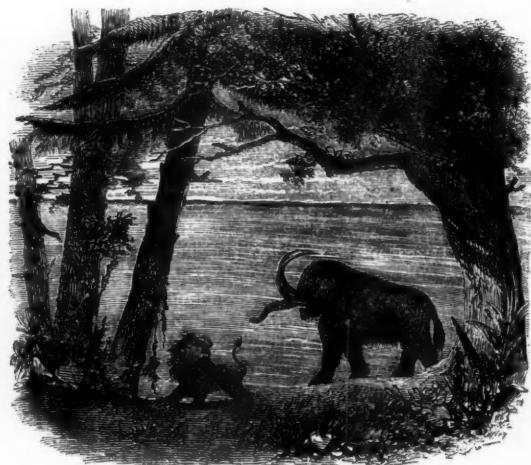
In the valley beneath us

"Palaces and fanes and villas rise."



THE THAMES VALLEY, A.D. 1872.

Pastoral and manufacturing industry, too, have made their home on the broad and luxurious plain which stretches between our hill and the gleaming Thames beyond. But in the light of such scenes as we have looked on to-day, how soon does the landscape before us dissolve, and appear once more in the aspects it wore in those far distant times when the mammoth came to the mightier waters to drink!



THE THAMES VALLEY IN THE OLDE TIME.

RICHARD BAXTER AT KIDDERMINSTER.

BY THE REV. EDWARD BRADLEY, RECTOR OF STRETTON, RUTLAND.

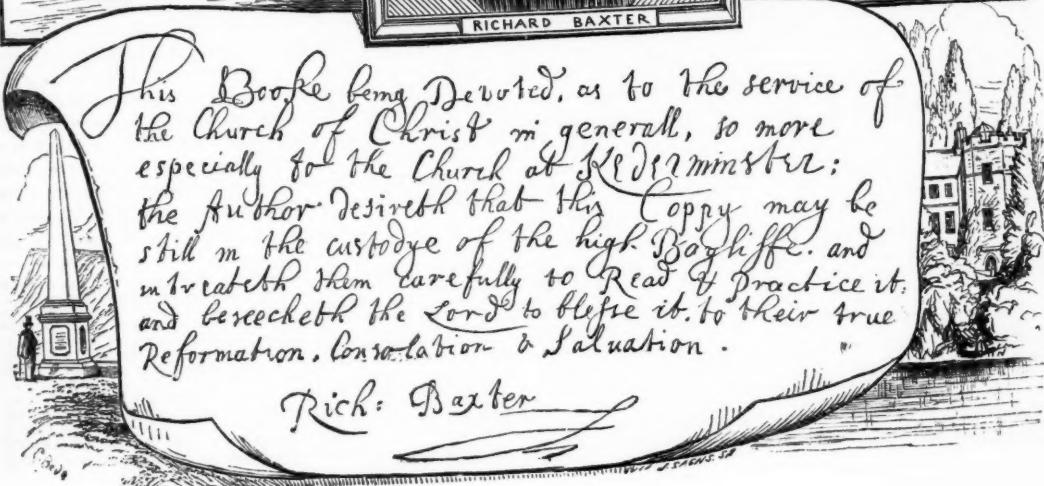
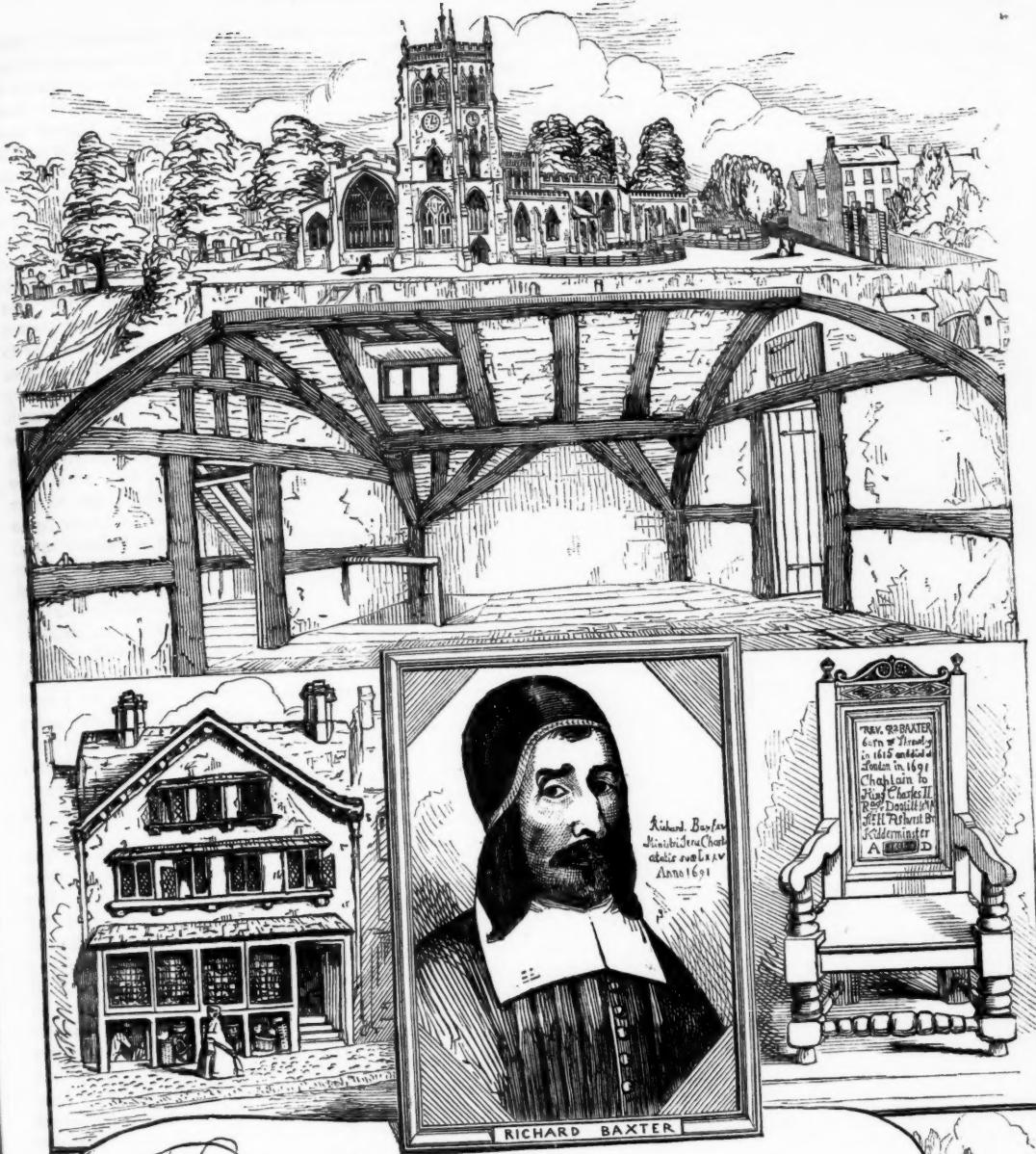
I.

IT might truly be said of "the reverend and learned Richard Baxter," that he needs no memorial so long as a copy of his "Saints' Everlasting Rest" is in existence. Yet, after the lapse of nearly two centuries, it has very properly been determined that a memorial shall be erected to him in that town in which, during the greater portion of sixteen years, he lived and taught, and wrote his well-known books, and which, as he himself testified, was "the place which had the chief of his labours, and yielded him the greatest fruits of comfort."

SHALL RICHARD BAXTER HAVE A STATUE?

The honour of originating the movement to erect some monument to Richard Baxter in the town of Kidderminster is due to Mr. H. Greaves, a member of the Town Council, and a Nonconformist; and it is a movement that will meet with the sympathy of every Protestant Christian. Mr. Greaves introduced the subject in a most able speech at a meeting of the Town Council, held in the Town Hall of Kidderminster (only a few yards distant from the house in which Baxter lived), on January 31st of the present year. His proposal was seconded by Mr. W. H. Green, and was at once warmly carried; and met with great acceptance not only in the town, but throughout the country and in America. The subject was further debated by the Council, and the mayor, W. Boycott, Esq., called a town's meeting, in order to decide upon the form that the proposed

memorial should take. This meeting was held at the Town Hall on April 16th, and had the support of the Bishop of Worcester, and other influential persons. Eloquent addresses were made by the vicar (the Rev. G. D. Boyle), and the Revs. E. Parry and I. Boseley (Nonconformist ministers); and it was resolved that the proposed memorial should take the form of a statue, to be erected on some conspicuous site in the town that is so inseparably associated with Baxter's fame. "There were many in that town," said the vicar, "who revered and honoured that beloved man, and who believed that to be baptized into the spirit of Baxter would be one of the greatest privileges that could be conferred upon them." The Rev. E. Parry reminded his hearers that, "during the whole course of his ministry in Kidderminster, Baxter was in conformity with the Established Church; and though in after years, for very powerful reasons, he had to cast in his lot with the Nonconformists, yet he never gave himself up wholly to any party, and that it would be impossible either for Conformist or Nonconformist to claim him wholly. Baxter's great aspiration was that Englishmen should be able to unite in one Christian national Church; his great aim was for comprehension; and there never was among British theologians a more catholic-minded man." It was hoped that the sum of £3,000 might be subscribed for the Baxter memorial. Several large subscriptions were speedily sent in, and, before these lines are in the reader's hands, the amount of donations will probably have been suffi-



cient to justify the committee in appointing a sculptor for the memorial of one who, in the eloquent words of the Bishop of Peterborough (Dr. Magee), was "a great and good man; a man long since canonised by consent of all Protestant Christians; a man whom Churchmen and Nonconformists, Episcopilians and anti-Episcopilians, have long since agreed in delighting to honour; a man whose virtues lay on the surface of his character; a man with a love for disputation, and a desire to resolve others rather than be resolved himself, yet patient, generous, brave, forgiving, foremost as a divine unequalled save by Jeremy Taylor as a casuist; a man who, fearing his Master, feared no other man. This was Richard Baxter."*

Such, briefly, is the history of the movement to erect a memorial to one of those worthies of England whose influence for good has been felt in every quarter of the globe; and the public attention being thus so pointedly directed to the subject of Richard Baxter at Kidderminster, it may serviceably help the cause to place before the readers of this magazine some pen and pencil sketches of certain matters connected with his life and ministry in that town. A full account of his labours in that place could not be given here, and must be read in his own "Narrative of the most Memorable Passages of his Life and Times;" or in the biographies of Calamy, Orme, Sylvester, Bates, Fawcett, and others; or in the admirably condensed "Life of the Rev. Richard Baxter"—telling the eventful tale of his career chiefly in his own words—published, at low cost, by the Religious Tract Society. But to these larger records I can add a few items of information gleaned during the years that have elapsed since 1827, when I was born within a stone's-throw of Baxter's house; and, after that, received an important part of my education in the Kidderminster Grammar School, at that time held in "the Chantry" at the east end of the parish church. I thus grew to manhood amid the scenes hallowed by Baxter's memory; and among the sketches made by me, more than twenty years ago, illustrative of the places associated with Baxter's life at Kidderminster, was the view of the exterior of the house in High Street in which he lived; which view is believed to be the only one in existence, and is here published for the first time. The other sketches are also engraved for the first time; though I may remark that to the "Gentleman's Magazine" for January, 1854, I contributed a copper-plate etching of "Baxter's Pulpit, preserved at Kidderminster."

BAXTER MONUMENT AT BLAKESHALL.

It is not strictly accurate to say, as has frequently been said of late in the public press, that the Kidderminster statue to Richard Baxter will be the first public memorial that has been erected to him in England; for, for the last twenty years, there has been standing, between three and four miles from Kidderminster, an obelisk fifty feet high, bearing the following inscription:—"To commemorate that devoted man, Richard Baxter, Minister of the Old Church, Kidderminster, about the year 1650, whose unwearied labours were so greatly blessed to that town and neighbourhood. Read his 'Saints' Ever-

lasting Rest' and 'Call to the Unconverted.'"
This obelisk stands in a highly romantic and elevated spot on Blakeshall Common, near Wolverley, and is in sight of the road to Bridgenorth, from whose "hardened" people, it will be remembered, Baxter first came to his beloved flock at Kidderminster, March 9, 1640. This pillar is shown in the lower left-hand corner of the page illustration; the high ridge of ground near to it, at the back, being Kinver Edge, on which Charles II and his companions halted in their flight from Worcester, reaching there in the dusk of the evening, by way of Chester Lane (skirting Kidderminster), Broadwaters, Sion Hill, Lea Castle, the Hay Bridge, and Blakeshall, and thence diverging to Stourton and the Stewponey, and so to Boscobel. This Kinver Edge is mentioned by Baxter as being the spot where the scouts of the king's army appeared on its march from Shrewsbury, through Wolverhampton, to Oxford, which so alarmed the brigades of the Earl of Essex's army, quartered in Kidderminster, that, not knowing but what the whole of the army might be advancing from Kinver Edge, they marched off to Worcester in such haste that they left some carriages and arms behind them. The obelisk was erected on the property, and at the expense, of William Hancocks, Esq., of Blakeshall House, who further evinced his admiration for him whose ministry in Kidderminster has conferred so great a distinction on the town by purchasing (in the autumn of 1862)* the house in High Street in which Baxter lived, and taking steps to preserve it from destruction and further alteration. The name "Baxter"—clarum ac venerabile nomen—and a date, painted in bold characters on the front of the house, are sufficient to arrest the attention of the stranger, and to denote the home of him who wrote his "Saints' Rest" within its walls.

But unfortunately there is nothing else on the exterior of the house to show that it is aught else than an ordinary shop of the Victorian era. The whole of the exterior and of the ground-floor was modernised in 1848-9, but in the upper portion of the interior, especially in the attics, the building has been allowed to remain untouched, and preserves all the genuine characteristics of that important period in its history when it was indeed "Baxter's House." Mr. Hancocks is very careful to maintain intact the old features of the building, and although of late years it has had more than one narrow escape from destruction by fire, it is to be hoped that it will stand for many generations, and will continue to preserve those features of its original state which it at present possesses. What an admirable home it would make for a Baxter Museum, in which might be collected the scattered relics that have now to be sought for elsewhere in the town, together with original portraits, engravings, or photographic copies of pictures (like to those shown by Mr. Albert Way, F.S.A., at the meeting of the Archaeological Society at Worcester in 1862), contemporary portraits, and views of the

* From a lecture on "Richard Baxter: his Life and Times," delivered before the Peterborough Literary Institution, January 23, 1872, by the Lord Bishop of Peterborough, President of the Institution.

* In 1863 Mr. Hancocks was enabled to purchase, and also to rescue from destruction, the home of Baxter's father at Eaton Constantine, near the Wrekin, Shropshire, where Richard Baxter lived from the age of ten to that of twenty-three, with the exception of the year and a half when he was studying at Ludlow, and the memorable month when he was staying at Whitehall with Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels. Mr. Hancocks thus possesses the two chief homes of Baxter. I have traced the ownership of the Kidderminster house up to 1789, when it was purchased from Nicholas Harbeck and Mary his wife by Mr. Powell, who bequeathed it to his wife's nephew, Mr. Perry, from whom it came to his granddaughter, the wife of the Rev. R. Tonnes, vicar of Coughton, near Bromsgrove. It passed out of her hands in 1847, but was repurchased by her (after the alterations) in 1858, and sold by her to Mr. Hancocks in 1862.

persons and places with whom and with which Baxter was identified, and original copies or early editions of his works. These are in themselves a library, but their collection in such a house would be singularly appropriate, so large a number of them having been written within its walls.

BAXTER'S WORKS.

Baxter's published works are at least one hundred and sixty-eight in number,* nearly sixty of which (many of them quarto volumes) were issued during his residence in Kidderminster, and, for the most part, written in the house in High Street. Of these the chief were—"The Saints' Everlasting Rest;" "Call to the Unconverted;" "Aphorisms of Justification;" "Treatise on Conversion;" "On Self-Denial;" "On Peace of Conscience;" "On Perseverance;" "On Christian Concord;" "On Crucifying the World;" "On Confirmation;" "On Saving Faith;" "On Death;" "On Church Government;" "On Universal Concord;" "Unreasonableness of Infidelity;" "Confession of Faith;" "Christian Religion;" "Holy Commonwealth;" "Key for Catholics;" his "Apology;" his many works on "Infant Baptism," and his "Reformed Pastor."

To these larger works must be added many of those single sheet publications which were affixed to walls and public buildings, and distributed among the people, and of which Baxter said, "though the style were not very moving, yet they might do more good than larger volumes, because most people would buy and read them who would neither buy nor read the larger." Of these sheets I may mention a few that were issued from the house in Kidderminster:—"One Sheet against the Quakers," "A Winding-sheet for Popery," "One Sheet for the Ministry against the Malignant of all Sorts," "A Second Sheet for the Ministry," "Directions for Justices of Peace, especially in Corporations, for the Discharge of their Duties to God," written at the request of Mr. William Montford, High Bailiff of Kidderminster. These sheets, and other publications, were published in London, and "Printed for Nevil Simmons, bookseller, in Kedderminster." This Nevil Simmons would appear to have resided in Kidderminster, up to the year 1664, as Baxter's "Divine Life, in Three Treatises," bears his imprint there at that date; but on being "broken," as Baxter says, in that town, he settled in London, where he continued to print for Baxter, first at "The Three Crowns, over against Holborn Conduit;" then "At the sign of the Prince's Arms, in St. Paul's Churchyard;" and then "At the sign of the Three Golden Cocks, at the West End of St. Paul's Churchyard." The B. Simmons who published Baxter's "Breviate" of the life of Mrs. Baxter, was probably the son and successor of Nevil Simmons; and there was a Nevill Symonds, bookseller of Sheffield, who published various works between 1696 and 1724.

BAXTER AND HIS PUBLISHERS.

Baxter's dealings with his publishers are fully set forth in his "Letter about the Case of Nevil Simmons," from which it appears that, like many other writers, he encountered numerous difficulties

and disagreeables in sending his books forth to the world. He received ten pounds for each edition of "The Saints' Rest," and his annual gains from his voluminous and popular writing would appear never to have exceeded the sum of eighty pounds, which was expended in liberal charity and in placing the aptest children of his parishioners at the Universities, which he was enabled to do "for eight pounds a year, or ten at the most." Besides Bibles, he distributed his own publications with an ungrudging hand, and of some small books gave each family one, which came to about eight hundred, "for," as he said, "he had found the benefit of reading to be so great, that he could not but think it would be profitable also to others."

THE SAINTS' REST.

It would be amply sufficient to confer a deathless interest in Baxter's house in the High Street, to bear in mind the fact that his three greatest works, "The Call to the Unconverted," "The Reformed Pastor," and "The Saints' Rest," were produced within its walls. For although "The Saints' Rest" was conceived by him when "sentenced to death by the physicians" in his chamber at Sir John Cook's, in Derbyshire, and the work itself was begun at Mr. Nowell's house at Kirkby Mallory, in Leicestershire, and continued at Sir Thomas Rous's in Worcestershire, yet it was finished at Kidderminster, and this, in six months after its commencement, although it was a quarto volume of more than 800 pages, and written under every disadvantage arising from constant pain and sickness and absence from his books. The latter deficiency he was enabled to supplement when he had returned to Kidderminster. "The marginal citations," he says, "I put in after I came home to my books; but almost all the book itself was written when I had no book but a Bible and a Concordance; and I found that the transcript of the heart hath the greatest force on the hearts of others." The beautiful and touching dedication of the completed work to his "Dearly Beloved Friends, the Inhabitants of the Borough and Foreign of Kidderminster, both Magistrates and People," is dated Jan. 15, 1649. The second edition was published in 1651, and a copy of it was presented by the author to the high bailiff of the town, and has ever since been most carefully preserved in the Corporation chest, from which (as is believed) it has, for many years, made but two brief flights—firstly, when it was exhibited at the meeting of the Archaeological Association held at Worcester in 1862, and secondly, when, a short time after that date, by the permission of the mayor, Pemberton Talbot, Esq., it was taken to a photographer's,* in order that I might more conveniently and accurately take that tracing (from the photograph) of Baxter's handwriting, which I have copied into the woodcut for these pages. The inscription on the fly-leaf, in Baxter's own handwriting, is as follows:—"This Booke being Devoted, as to the service of the Church of Christ in generall, so more especially to the Church at Kedderminster; the Author desireth that this Copy may be still in the custodye of the high Bayliffe, and intreateth them carefully to Read & Practice it, and beseecheth the Lord to blesse it, to their true Reformation, Consolation, and Salvation.—Rich. Baxter."

* The Rev. A. B. Grossart tells me of another to be added to this long list. It is a posthumous work, unknown to biographers of Baxter, entitled, "The Grand Question Resolved: What we must do to be Saved. Instructions for a Holy Life. By the late reverend divine, Mr. Richard Baxter. Recommended to the bookseller a few days before his death, to be immediately printed for the good of souls." (1692.)

* Mr. Howard, Church Street, Kidderminster, from whom may be procured photographs of the inscription, and also of Baxter's pulpit and church.

BAXTER'S HANDWRITING.

Although Baxter made use of short-hand in the composition of his sermons, yet his works for the publisher must have been penned in the ordinary way. It surprises us to think how he could have accomplished so much pen work in the midst of his incessant labours; and from so voluminous an author and rapid thinker we might have expected that his handwriting would have betrayed marks of headlong haste, and that the pen being unable to keep pace with the rush of thoughts from the quick-teeming brain, scrawling, contractions, omissions, and blots would be the result. But such is not the case; Baxter's manuscript is singularly neat, every *i* is dotted, every *t* is crossed, every letter is clearly formed, and frequently the letters are disjoined, as in printing, showing that the quill was often lifted from the paper during the penning of one word—a circumstance somewhat rare in rapid, cursive writing. With the hope that I might find some trace of Baxter in the registers of the parish church, I have twice gone over the books very carefully, and arrived at the conclusion that, not only was there not the slightest mention of, or reference to, him, but that there was not the least vestige of his handwriting in their pages. In this opinion I was confirmed by an expert in old handwritings (the late Mr. B. Kimberley), who kindly complied with my request to examine the registers between the years 1640 and 1660, and who found that they did not contain any fragment of Baxter's manuscript. The whole of the entries for that period are "engrossed" and not in "plain writing," a circumstance to be accounted for by the fact that, during the Civil War, lay registrars (usually schoolmasters or lawyers) were appointed by Act of Parliament, though in a few instances the ejected clergy continued to keep their registers. John Pitt, schoolmaster, who was buried March 4, 1653, probably kept the registers for some time before his death, and marked therein with special marks of distinction any entry relating to the families of schoolmasters, even to copying therein from the Dowles register the marriage of James Pitt. From 1643 to 1646 the headings to the months are in "illuminated" characters. On August 24, 1653, Edward Climar was unanimously elected registrar of Kidderminster at a public meeting; and some entries in the register throw light on the history of the town during Baxter's residence:—A "valiant soldier" breaks his neck "fallinge downe the rock towards Cussfield, into the hollow way that leads to Beaudley." The minister of Bewdley was that John Tombes with whom Baxter had so many controversial tussles; and Cussfield is on the other side the Stour from the parish church, and was the spot where, according to a familiar legend, the church was many times begun to be built, but was as often thrown down by Satanic agency, the spot from that circumstance being called "The Curst-field." The banns of marriage were published by Mr. Climar, in the market-place held in the High Town near to Baxter's house, and the ceremony of marriage was performed, not by Baxter, but by Mr. Nicholas Pearsall, justice of the peace.

BAXTER'S HOUSE IN KIDDERMINSTER.

Baxter's house is situated on the northern side of the lower portion of the High Street, having a southern aspect to the gentle rise of the street. It is two houses above the Town Hall, which is at the

lower end of the street. The houses on this side of the High Street have no back premises, as another street—Swan Street (but commonly called, "Behind Shops")—runs at the back of, and parallel with, it. My sketch of the exterior of the house, taken previously to its alterations in 1848–9, shows that it was a high-gabled house, with three stories of low-ceilinged rooms, lighted by long ranges of casements. An ascent of four steps led into the ground-floor room, the long window of which projected over the pavement, and was tiled above and supported by wooden pillars, which served to mark the boundary allotted to the display of the handiwork of the basket-maker who plied his trade in the capacious cellar. To descend to this basket-maker, one had to stoop underneath the window, and go down the flight of steps into the cellar; but, ordinarily, a customer was spared this trouble by the basket-maker coming up the steps to wait upon him. This cellar had, at the time of which I am speaking, nothing to do with the shop above it, which was tenanted by a shoemaker; and it is somewhat singular that a succession of shoemakers has tenanted it up to the present day. In 1848–9, the defacing alterations substituted for the ancient picturesqueness of Baxter's house a vulgar stuccoed modern shop-front, annihilating the basket-maker's cellar, and lowering the ground-floor to the level of the street. But, happily, the two upper stories were left untouched internally, and are preserved intact to the present day. The three attics are shown in one of my sketches. Their roofs are of singular formation, somewhat in the fashion of a transept, or a cross gabled at its four extremities; the oaken floor bears evidences of great age; and the walls are crossed and re-crossed with huge oaken beams that go down from the roof-tops to the very foundations. One of these attics was, very probably, Baxter's bedroom. There is no doubt that he tenanted these attics, because he expressly says that he had "but a few rooms at the top of another man's house," with the house-rent for them, and nothing else in shape of payment or stipend, "but eighty pounds per annum, or ninety at most." Perhaps Baxter tenanted these three attics and the chief portion of the floor underneath them: and I conclude so from the following reasons:—He must have had one good-sized room in which he could hold his various meetings, and I imagine that this room was the one immediately over the (present) shop, looking into the High Street. Besides meetings of his fellow-ministers, pastoral conference, and "disputations," Baxter, on Thursday evenings, received at his house his neighbours and devout members of his congregation, where his sermon of that day, or the previous Sunday, was discussed, prayer was engaged in, and a psalm was sung. On another day in each week, seven families came to his house for conference and catechetical instruction. The youth of the town were his frequent guests, but had a special day at his house on the first of every month. In the preface to his "Compassionate Counsel to all Young Men," he speaks of the young men and women of Kidderminster with peculiar affection; and, elsewhere, tells of the "many children that God did work upon at fourteen, fifteen, or sixteen years of age," through the means of his teaching; and so strongly did he regard the tie that held him to his Kidderminster flock that he said he was persuaded that he was sent into the world especially for the service of their souls.

But he must have had rooms for two or three others besides himself. Of servants he kept but one, a woman of whom he thus writes, when speaking of the circumstances that furthered the success of his ministry in Kidderminster: "In my own family I had the help of my father and mother-in-law, and the benefit of a godly, understanding, faithful servant (an ancient woman, near sixty years old), who eased me of all care, and laid out all my money for housekeeping, so that I never had one hour's trouble about it, nor ever took one day's account of her for fourteen years together, as being certain of her fidelity, honesty, and skill." Beyond this slight and ambiguous mention of his father and "mother-in-law"—by which is meant his stepmother—we have no evidence that they lived with, or even visited, their illustrious son at his Kidderminster home; but of his domestic treasure we have further particulars in that "Breviat" of her life which he published after her death, and in which he calls her his "old friend and housekeeper, Jane Matthews, who lived in pious, humble virginity, with eminent worth, to be about seventy-six or seventy-seven years." Besides this excellent Jane Matthews, at least two of Baxter's assistants lived with him in the house. These were Mr. Joseph Read—whom he sent to Cambridge, and who was ultimately ejected from Whitley—and Mr. Thomas Baldwin, who had been a schoolmaster in Kidderminster, and who was, eventually, Baxter's successor in the ministry in that town. Of Baldwin's "Treatise on Conversion," dedicated to the inhabitants of Kidderminster, Baxter says, "It was the substance of some plain sermons on conversion which Mr. Baldwin, who lived in my house, and learned the short-hand characters in which I wrote my pulpit notes, had transcribed." In other dedications and prefaces to his Kidderminster flock, wherein so much may be found of interest to the townspeople, though the passages are too many and too copious to be here quoted, he also refers to his house in the High Street; and in his "Premotion" to "The Saints' Rest" he calls it his "home."

NUTS WITHOUT KERNELS.

"This is the third empty one I have cracked; it is really too bad," said Mrs. Constant, across the table to her husband.

"Types of humanity," said Mr. Constant.

"I shall lecture Brown and Bright well," said Mrs. Constant, cracking a fourth and a fifth, and throwing down her nut-cracker in great disgust.

"And they will look astonished, though they probably knew they were selling empty shells, and will tell you they are more grieved than they can express—that they will make complaints to their factors—in short, that the whole business of the firm shall be suspended till you are informed how it came about that they were so unhappy as to be imposed upon, and were so exceedingly more unhappy as to have imposed upon you!" said Mr. Constant.

"Why, what an opinion you have of them!" said his wife; "I don't call them dishonest."

"Simply shells without kernels," said Mr. Constant.

Mrs. Constant was provoked about her nuts, and not at all reconciled to her disappointment by her husband's remarks. She was not of a figurative turn

of mind, and saw no likeness between her grocers and their nuts.

"I shall call to-morrow," she said, gathering the defective and condemned nuts into a bag.

"Maria," said Mr. Constant, "sometimes I consider you as a nut without a kernel."

"You are always talking some nonsense, Mr. Constant," said the lady.

"Maria," said Mr. Constant, as she was leaving the room, "the next time I detect you in one of your practical glosses, I shall call you an 'empty shell'!"

Mrs. Constant didn't wait to hear the threat; she was on her way to her store-room to deposit her bag.

But she returned hastily. "Can anything be more vexatious?" she exclaimed. "Such a party coming up the walk. I saw them through the hall window, and I had dinner early on purpose that I might see the trimming put on my dress by daylight!"

"Why didn't you do that this morning?" asked Mr. Constant.

"How could I when the skirt was not finished?" she replied, peevishly.

"Let us hope they also have dresses to trim, and then they will be in as great a hurry to go as you will be to get rid of them," said he. Then, taking a glance through the muslin curtain, he added, "One, two, three, four!—absolutely four, Maria! It is—yes, dear, it is Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Treddles, and Miss Rosemary."

"Then they will *never* go!" exclaimed the poor lady, throwing herself despairingly into a chair; "I wish—I wish I had told Thomas to say I was particularly engaged."

But it was too late; a loud knock, a door closed, and talking in the hall, announced the fatal fact that the invaders were safe in the drawing-room, even before Thomas solemnly delivered himself of their names to his disconcerted mistress.

"They are thorough bores—*always bores*—but to come to-day!" exclaimed Mrs. Constant, almost crying.

"Mr. Treddles is there; I will go and entertain them till you recover your spirits," said her husband, departing on his errand.

When Mrs. Constant made her appearance a few minutes after, it was with an urbane smile and a cordial welcome: "It was so kind of Mrs. Treddles to call, for she knew she was in her debt!"

Mrs. Treddles looked amiably satisfied that she had performed a good action, and immediately began a little run of small talk—telling Mrs. Constant town news which she knew already, and desiring her opinion on various matters in which she was not interested; but Mrs. Constant received the news, and gave her opinion with a gusto that succeeded in convincing Mrs. Treddles she was affording her a world of pleasure. Mr. Treddles being quite deaf, and Mr. Constant not understanding finger talking, he had set him down to the inspection of some beautiful photographs of foreign buildings, and then betaken himself to Miss Rosemary, for it was a principle with him always to talk to the governess, if he had a chance, having a right to expect from her the most sense, information, and amiability of the party. Miss Treddles was occupied in prompting her mamma, lest anything should be forgotten that ought to be said.

Every now and then Mr. Constant cast a look towards his victimised wife, and although Mrs. and Miss Treddles were happily deceived, he detected

the irritation and despair that lurked under the pained, forced smile and restless eye. "Her heart is on a flounce or a puffing," he thought to himself.

"Mamma, it is surely near Mrs. Constant's dinner hour," said Miss Treddles at length.

"How thankful she will be," thought Mr. Constant.

"Oh, pray do not hurry; Mr. Treddles has not finished his book," said Mrs. Constant, with a voice and look as bland as she could command.

Upon which Miss Treddles began to make signs to him to make haste, but he merely smiled and nodded and looked back on his book. Whereupon Mrs. Treddles bethought her of a new theme of discourse as lively as the last, and Miss Treddles prompted with renewed vigour. All her little ones had had measles; all that they had done and suffered, what they had said, how they had looked, were all faithfully related.

"But we are tiring Mrs. Constant, love," said Mrs. Treddles at last; "and we shall be late for Miss Rosemary's duties. Do make your papa understand we must go."

Mrs. Constant would not for the world interfere with Miss Rosemary and duty; but as to being tired, she never grew tired of hearing about children—little dears.

So Mr. Treddles shut the book, looking sorry to leave it, and Miss Rosemary finished her agreeable talk, wishing she more frequently met with such company; and Mrs. and Miss Treddles spent the last minute in imploring Mrs. Constant to call soon, which that lady, relieved by the prospect of deliverance, promised to do with an alacrity and warmth that might have led them to expect her immediately after breakfast the very next morning.

"Maria!" exclaimed Mr. Constant, as his wife was hurrying up-stairs.

"Oh, pray don't stop me!" she replied.

"Only, dear, remember when you scold Brown and Bright, that they are not the only folks that sport empty shells," he said.

"Would you have had me tell them what I really felt?" she answered, as she went on her way. "How can you be so absurd?"

Notwithstanding the invasion of the Treddles family, the dress was finished in time for Mrs. Constant to wear it that very evening at a lecture given by Dr. Gong to a select party of friends.

"I wonder, Mr. Constant, what made you accept this invitation," said the lady, as she stood shivering in her company dress, waiting for the carriage. "Of all things, I hate lectures; and of all lecturers, I hate Dr. Gong. We shall have a delectable evening—and such a subject, too! 'Memory.' What do I want to know about memory? I never forget anything that I want to remember."

Mr. Constant shrugged up his shoulders: he was sorry; he would even now go alone, and take an apology from his wife, that she was not disposed to go out.

"Yes, very likely; and set Mrs. Gong's tongue going about my incivility all over the town," she replied.

"If you get very sleepy, I will give you a pinch of snuff," said Mr. Constant, as they got into the carriage.

"Whatever you do, don't seat me by Mrs. Treddles—they will be there—nor within half-a-dozen of Miss Blaze. I cannot endure her rhodomontade any more than the tittle-tattle of the other."

"You shall choose your own seat, if I can enable you to do it," said Mr. Constant, and they drove off.

The lecture-room was nearly full when they arrived; but Mrs. Gong was in a small reception-room, into which the guests were ushered as they came, where Dr. Gong was taking coffee.

"Fortifying yourself, sir?" said Mr. Constant, going up to him. "It is very kind of you to take so much trouble for us."

"Oh, so very kind, and such an interesting subject," said Mrs. Constant.

Mr. Constant looked at her.

"Dr. Gong is so unfortunately popular as a lecturer, that I am afraid he will never give up the calling while he has a voice," said Mrs. Gong, a little pompously.

"We owe our talents, however poor and small, to the public, my dear," said Dr. Gong, still more pompously.

"Do you think," said Mr. Constant, very glad of the cup of coffee which Mrs. Gong had presented to him, "that your audience will be able to enter into your subject, so as to enjoy as well as profit by it?"

"Some; some not," said Dr. Gong. "You know I can furnish information, but not intellect."

"This subject is quite Dr. Gong's forte," remarked Mrs. Gong, impressively. Mr. Constant took out his pocket-book and made a memorandum. The doctor and his lady supposed it to be of the sentiment he had uttered, but it was merely to the purport of his having found another empty shell, "for here," he thought, "is a man who professes to spend himself in doing good to the public, and chooses a subject which he believes they won't understand, purely because it is one in which he thinks he shines as a lecturer."

Happily Mrs. Constant escaped Miss Blaze and Mrs. Treddles; they were both far off her seat; but young Mr. Gong was at her elbow, and not a single yawn could she solace herself with behind her handkerchief, he was so pertinacious in commenting in a whisper upon all his uncle's remarks.

Wherefore, whenever Mr. Constant looked round at her, he found her staring vehemently, or frowning very wisely, or smiling with all the animation she could muster, at the dull witticisms with which the lecturer interlarded his lecture.

At last it was over, and some who had been in a shady place and enjoyed a sound nap, looked very lively, but with rather a frightened expression as they joined in the plaudits of the company. Others, who had merely nodded occasionally, and had neither been blest with the sweets of sleep nor the merits of wakefulness, looked doubtfully towards Mrs. Gong's seat to discover if she had watched them; but all, from the best to the worst-behaved, were thankful it was over, and very sincerely applauded the doctor for leaving off, if for nothing else.

"I wish you had come earlier, dear," said Miss Blaze to Mrs. Constant; "I kept a seat for you a long time, but was obliged to give it up."

"Thank you a thousand times," said Mrs. Constant.

The vehement nods of the Treddles family, and looks of regret that they had not approximated with her, were truly affecting, as were hers in return.

"I'm sure we can never thank Dr. Gong enough," said Mrs. Constant, as they were taking leave, "can we, dear?" and she appealed to her husband, who was writing in his note-book.

"Oh, I have such a headache! Now, Mr. Constant, I do beg you will never expose me to such a trial again," said the lady as they drove home.

"Why didn't you go to sleep, as many did who were as energetic as you were in saying how they had enjoyed the evening, with considerably more truth than you, my dear?"

"Sleep! I should have been thankful; but how could I with that odious boy at my elbow, buzzing all sorts of stuff into my ears, as if his uncle wasn't torment enough?" said Mrs. Constant.

"Why, Maria, you told Mrs. Gong you were quite charmed with his attentions, he threw such a light upon the lecture!" said her husband.

"Did I? I don't know what I said. He wouldn't give me a moment's peace, I know that."

"Shells without kernels," said Mr. Constant.

"How you talk! Am I worse than other people?" asked his wife, impatiently.

"Not at all, I am afraid. When I looked round on that audience, and saw how many were pretending to understand and didn't, how many to be amused and weren't, how all wished to be considered wide awake and half were asleep, I said to myself, 'Here is a bag of empty nuts!'"

"I'm sure I'm not more insincere than Mrs. Treddles and Miss Blaze," said the lady; "they neither of them cared a pin for it; and how they flattered and praised the doctor to Mrs. Gong!"

"And how they pretended to love you, when you know they care no more for you than they did for the lecture."

"Yes, I believe it. What a world it is!" said Mrs. Constant, quite shocked at the picture thus presented.

"A bag of empty nuts," said Mr. Constant.

"Well, I'm sure people would save themselves much trouble if they would be sincere," said his wife.

"Certainly. When Mrs. Treddles told her daughter they must call here to-day, Miss Treddles said, 'Oh, mamma, don't; Mrs. Constant always keeps us such a time, and she owes us a call; pray don't go.' And when Mrs. Treddles said, 'It's kind, my dear; it's a great sacrifice of time now the little ones are poorly, but I know she gets huffed if she's neglected, and one must keep up acquaintance,' she was as much on the fidgets to go as you were to get rid of her, and no doubt the first thing she said when she got out of the door was, 'Thank goodness! that's over; I thought we should never escape.' Then, again, Dr. Gong likes to hear himself talk; so he gives a lecture, and professes pure philanthropy in doing it, and the company invited overload him with thanks and praise till their backs are turned, when they do as you have done."

"But if one always said exactly what one thought?" said Mrs. Constant.

"To suppress what we think is kind sometimes; to tell all would be equally unnecessary and unkind; but the evil is in saying what we don't think. There is no necessity for that at any time, and if a little more regard were had to truth, I am sure much discomfort would be saved."

"But could I tell Mrs. Treddles not to call again, and show her the door when she did; and could I say to Dr. Gong, 'You are tiresome and droning to the last degree, and never ask me to listen to you again'; and to his nephew, 'You miserable boy, you have given me a headache?'" inquired the lady.

"Certainly not," said her husband; "but you need not make complimentary speeches that you don't mean, nor profess feelings that you don't entertain. Whenever you do, you are as bad as Bright and Brown's nuts without kernels."

"HEAD OF THE RIVER."

SUCH was Pembroke, two months or so back—in the merry month of May of this present year 1872. Of course my friend (being a Pembroke man) and I drove to Oxford in honour of the event.

The "Mitre" we put up at, not being inclined for various reasons to the more gorgeous "Randolph," which is now so much frequented; and from the "Mitre," after a visit for reading purposes to the "Union," which everybody is aware is not a workhouse, and after a frugal luncheon-dinner, and some explorations into Worcester, Christchurch, and a few other colleges, and a cup of tea, we found six p.m. near at hand.

The river-side on this last of the eight days was much crowded, and so were the barges. We found our way on to the Pembroke barge, where our Pembroke friend, having left the University, was challenged for his ticket; which, considering that he had in undergraduate days been a successful secretary and collector for Pembroke, was a good joke. I, who had no sort of right, except through the sunshine of my friend's countenance, to a place on the barge, was unchallenged; and so, I observed, was Dr. Harvey Goodwin, the bishop of Carlisle, who is a Caius man (Cambridge), and looked particularly happy upon this festive occasion. Pembroke men of the very junior kind were naturally a little "put up" by what was pretty sure to be their triumph, and one of them making, I observed, very curt and haughty answers to various inquiries, I endeavoured, for the fun of the thing, to draw him forth a little.

"Pray, sir," inquired I, "is that the Magdalene Hall boat?"

"No, it is not the Magdalene Hall boat;" and he gave me his shoulder to look at.

"Pray, what boat is it, then?"

"I don't know what boat it is, then."

He had three ladies with him, and they did not look as if they were as proud of him as he thought they would be. He was about eighteen, and beardless; and his interrogator was more than twice that age, with grey hairs sprinkled here and there about his beard and whiskers too. Perhaps it was the, I confess, shamefully mud-besprinkled coat of his interrogator which made this young man rejoice like a giant (only he was not more than five feet six, I am sure) to run his course. He afterwards made most respectful room for me to see the boats come on; but the way that politeness was brought about is quite too funny and too personal to be noted.

Three guns were to be fired, at the sound of the third of which the start was to be made. There had been several "bumps" in the previous seven days. Brasenose had bumped University; Balliol also had bumped University; New had bumped Lincoln; Merton, Worcester; and Pembroke had won its place by bumping Christchurch, Balliol, and University. The rule of the road, or rather of the river, in these annual races is this: whichever boat

was first last year, starts this year a length and a half (I think it is) before what was last year the second boat, the second as much before the third, the third before the fourth, and so on, to the last. The thing to be done by a boat is to keep ahead, so that its successor does not "bump" it—that is, touch it with its prow, and to go ahead so as to bump the boat in advance. University College started this year "head of the river"—that is, kept the first place last year, having won it the year before last, and Pembroke, I think, fourth. University was soon bumped, having this year a poor "eight" altogether, and it has lost five or six places. Pembroke has a capital team, including two of the University eight—that is, not of the University *college* eight, but of the Oxford eight that contended against Cambridge. These races upon the Isis are college races, and bear about the same relationship to the great University race on the Thames between Oxford and Cambridge, as a cricket match between Kent and Essex, or a base ball match between New York and Pennsylvania, would bear to a match between All England and All America. But they are glorious races; and as the Oxford eight are scattered over the college crews, here one and there one, the rowing is wonderfully good.

Pembroke having made three bumps came evidently to the first place, and held it on. There was just the little excitement of possible loss to give zest to the occasion, but it was evident that Pembroke meant to keep the headship. Her boat had been rowed, I believe, by the Oxford Etonians at Henley, and is a tried favourite; besides which the two men, from the eight that had only just been beaten by Cambridge, made a tower of strength in themselves.

Gun first. From down below, where are pleasant things to read, and so beguile waiting time, people climb aloft to the barge deck, and begin to stretch their necks—some of them very graceful necks too, if it were not for ugly chignons and other such disfigurements—in the direction of the coming race.

Gun second. My friend, the young undergraduate of the stern and simple negatives, begins to enlighten his ladies about the various colours of the various boats, and to teach them to look for the Pembroke red as the colour that is sure to win. Chairs are vacated and the taffrail is somewhat perilously leant over by enthusiastic children of twelve and fourteen, mammas and elder sisters seeming for the moment indifferent to, if not unconscious of, danger. Excitement grows keener upon every side.

Gun third. They are off, although we cannot see their start. We can only wait and watch which boat comes first into sight. The distance to be rowed is far greater for the last boat, the number of boats being over twenty, than for the first. The greater the number of boats the shorter, in fact, is the distance for all but the last boat to row. Colleges that are anxious about keeping the first place, have been known, it is said, when they apprehend a "narrow squeak," to put on a second boat, so as to lessen the distance for their first boat to go; and this is considered a perfectly lawful bit of tactics, any college being at liberty to start two boats at any race, by paying the usual fees. But nothing of that kind is done by Pembroke;—and here come the foremost boats.

Pembroke holds her own gallantly; and as she passes the Pembroke barge, followed closely but not quite dangerously by Balliol, Balliol by Brasenose,

Brasenose by Christchurch, but no further alphabetically, a shout of welcome rises from barge and shore alike, hats are waved, and on goes the red-rose (Pembroke's cognizance) straight to the winning place, to become till next year head of the river; to be saluted by the band with "See, the Conquering Hero comes;" and to be saluted, too, at the following commemoration, by all the boats, both torpids and eights, in humble and chivalric deference. The torpids, it should be explained, are the second boats of each college, the eights being the champion crews. A college has its best boat and its second best; but these "torpids" are extremely lively and swift, and make the training and stock and store out of which come the eights. The torpids do not show in these races.

Keble College has its eight, and although (I think) last on the river at present, will doubtless, by-and-by, get a good place. It is very early days for Keble, and the fact of having an eight shows that Keble means to be a manly as well as a studious college, and to win races on the river as well as *in literis humanioribus*. The holy man after whom it is named, would have been the last to advocate youthful priggism or juvenile seclusion.

No boat has ever remained head of the river for more than four continuous years, and this has only happened once and to one college. Also, the space was in those days larger between each boat than is now prescribed. Of course, in the first of the college races (thirty-six years ago), the boats must have started level, but it is a far more stirring and evenly-divided interest under present arrangements, by which there are many minor triumphs, as well as the one great triumph to be won. A "bump," even if your boat is last, is a step gained and a triumph won, and the following night you may bump the next higher boat, and so on, till you win your way to the van. This distribution of encouragements and successes is a most interesting feature in the boat races, and is far more suggestive of after life to the eager young athletes, than if it were only the first place that is aimed at. There must be one head, and after that there may be a dozen minor triumphs. "Overlapping" without bumping gains no place, it may as well be added.

There must be one head,—I was going to add "especially in such a place as Oxford;" but the contemplated remark reminds me of a curious Oxford fact. One of the colleges of Oxford has lately petitioned to be left "headless" and republican. Its petition has not been granted, but the very existence of such a desire speaks volumes. The same college was, somewhat inconsistently, represented in the river contention for headship on the 16th of May.

The very instant the race was decided, without waiting for the triumphal row back, we bent our steps "Mitre"-wards, and found that we could have caught the train with half a minute or so to spare. But our route was by high-road and bye-road, and we duly reached our home some short time after the stars began to blink.

There is not much to be said in the way of sober reflection about these, to youth and eagerness, happy days. May Pembroke remain head of the river till over next year, and till my Christchurch friend that does not approve my "Pembroke fit" at all, has won me over to Christchurch sympathies. I can say no more, and ought to say no less, as I am not an Oxford man myself.